

Saint Thomas and Saint Thomas of the Air Church
 First Sunday after Trinity
 June 22, 2025
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Beloved, let us love one another

And so it begins,
 The long green season of Trinity
 22 weeks this year,
 that will take us to the end of November.
 5 months in which to survey the essential doctrines of
 Christianity.
 A Summer Survey of Essential Christian Thought.
 Before we again anticipate, rejoin and walk
 the life of Jesus on this Earth
 from His Birth to His Ascension.

It is the brilliance of our Christian Calendar
 In which a series of what we call Seasons and “Tides”
 Cyclically revolve each year in perpetual revelation
 Of Our Lord in our lives.
 It almost feels as though the revolution of the Gospels
 and Epistles and Collects
 mimic the revolution of the Earth about the Sun.
 The rhythm of our lives, the rhythm of the four seasons
 and the rhythm of the Gospels, Epistles and Collects
 coincide and seem to reflect life itself.

Our ancestors lived their faith everyday.
 Their lives were matched to the calendar of the Church
 And the Gospels, Epistles and Collects
 Of the Church Seasons and Tides.
 Their customs, music, diet, habits; all had Christian origin
 And reflected their Christian beliefs and understanding.

We have by and large, abandoned them and their customs.
 But the Calendar lives on, there for us to but to step on board
 For the trip of our lives;
 A journey to God.

And so the Journey, the long green, the Trinity Season begins
 With a Parable of Jesus about Heaven and Hell,
 a message of Love from St John
 And a Collect beseeching God to grant us Grace.

It is a lot to consider
 But let's hear from St John this day.

We open the Trinity Season with John's Epistle
 A letter he wrote near the end of the first century.
 A letter he wrote not long before he died.
 A letter that reads more like a treatise than correspondence.
 A letter that expands upon his Gospel
 And specifically Jesus' answer to Nicodemus
 John 3:16:
 "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten
 Son, that whosoever believeth in Him
 Should not perish, but have everlasting life".

Those of us in the Anglican Province of Christ the King
 Have a special affinity with John.
 You see, we trace our ordination in Apostolic Succession to John.
 There is evidence of an unbroken series of ordination
 From John to the next bishop, to the next bishop
 all the way to Bishop Robert Morse
 who ordained me, his final ordination.
 So all of us who were ordained by Bishop Morse
 Felt the hands of John.
 So, let's consider what John has to say to us in His First Epistle.

John wrote the word “love” 27 times in these 15 verses.
 So before moving on, we should hold a firm understand of
 The love that John is talking about.

You have heard me say before that English is a wonderful
 language, but it has its drawbacks sometimes.
 This is one of those times.

We have but one word in our language that describes the powerful
 Emotion of love.

However, there are many different varieties of love

In our lives:

The romantic and erotic love between two people

The love of a parent for a child

The love of a sibling for another sibling

The love of a close friend

The love of country

The love of a household pet

We even use the word love to describe our approval
 of a product, object, food or a garment or a color.

We love God and Jesus

We love the church. We love the people of the Church.

Each a special and individual feeling

Yet we have only one English word

To describe them all; Love

Paul wrote in Greek, where there is no such limitation.
 He could chose from among at least 7 different words to describe
 The unique types of love.

For this discussion he chose; “agape”

Meaning the fatherly love of God to all of us

And our reciprocal love of God.

It is the highest form of love in the Greek language.

Crippled by the language, I will hereafter use the word love

But please know it is in John's sense of agape that I speak.
 OK, now with all the preliminaries concluded, what is St John
 telling us today and how should it effect our lives?

He begins with instruction and an explanation.
 "Love one another for love is of God."

John's instruction for us to love one another is from Jesus Himself.
 The love John writes about is that of agape-
 a unique Christian love.
 The love we share with God
 And with each other.

A deep, profound desire for the well being of each other
 And the deep affection from and to God
 Along the lines of parental love, but more powerful.

John's explanation is eye-opening.
 "Love is of God"

Have you ever thought about the origin of love?
 Where did it come from?
 How did we get it?
 When you think about it, love is the most powerful force
 Ever unleashed upon the planet Earth.
 Nothing has moved and motivated mankind more than love.
 Unfortunately, love of country and love of God
 Has occasionally been the motivating factor of wars.
 Love has moved lovers, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters
 From the beginning of time unto the present
 To sacrifice
 To nurturing, maintenance, nursing, protection, providing,
 In incalculable numbers.
 To the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus, the Christ.

So where did we get it?

With all of the advances of medical science and DNA research
We can't find it anywhere in our biology.
And there are no other living beings,
creatures,
plants,
fish,
birds,
animals,
substances that possess love as we know it.
In all of creation, we seem to be alone with regard to love.
God gave it to us alone.

John gives the answer to its origin
"Love is of God,"
He tells us "God is love."
At least a major component of God, is Love.
According to Genesis, He made us in His likeness and image
And imparted in us the capacity to love and to be loved
In the Christian sense of the word.

So we begin our Summer Survey of Christianity with the profound
Notion that we get the ability to love and to be loved
From God,
Who imparts to us love from God at our creation.
John takes it a step further,
If you love, you are a child of God
If you don't love, you are not a child of God.
The proof of our lives with God,
is the existence of love in our lives.

Should any of us require more proof,
John recommends that we need only look to the life,
Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.
Could there be a greater act of love than to give

His only begotten Son for the propitiation of our sins?
 All of this seems to be enough for us to think about
 But John won't let us go just yet.

You see, he wants us to know a little more.
 That our love of God allows us to be bold on the day of our
 Judgment at the end of time.

Because as He is – so are we in this world.
 The love we share with Him, transforms us enough
 to be like as to Him as we live our lives.

We who love need have no fear of those times,
 Love casts out our fear.
 In fear there is torment, the anxiety of our ending.
 He that fears is not yet complete in God's love.

John throws an example at our feet:
 If I say I love God
 But retain hate of another
 I am a liar.
 Because how could I not love someone whom I can see
 And love God whom I have not seen?

We are commanded that if we love God, we love His other
 creations as well.

So we begin the Summer Survey of Essential Christian Doctrine
 With its basic building block
 Its corner stone
 Upon which all else will depend
 Which infuses and inspires every other aspect of Christianity
 This notion of Christian love.

John was well stricken with age
 Nearing his 100th year on this Earth

He was the last of the 12 Apostles and in great demand.

Everyone wanted him to come to their church

To hear first hand account of Jesus

Of the 3 year Earthly ministry of Our Lord

Of the miracles

Of the discourses

Of the Resurrection and Ascension

He lived his last years in Ephesus

But traveled to the Churches Paul had established

Among great excitement and acclaim.

In one such church he was asked to give the sermon to a packed church.

At the appointed time, he was introduced

And rose from his seat in the back

There was great anticipation

As he shuffled with his walking stick to the front.

He was bent over with age

Every step was punctuated with the tap of his stick.

He finally turned and faced the people.

a hush came over the room

John looked at them through tired eyes

He took a breath and he said:

“My little children: Love one another”

Then silence.

A man near him asked, “Is that all you have to say?”

John replied “it is enough”

And walked back into history.

Beloved, let us love one another.

